

## Diagnosis Revenge

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Category: Diagnosis Murder

Genre: Drama

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2000-01-31 08:00:00

Updated: 2000-01-31 08:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 11:51:21

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 10,154

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

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## Diagnosis Revenge

### DIAGNOSIS REVENGE

>Synopsis: Mark and Madison are interrupted during a romantic getaway by someone <br>out for revenge against Steve.

>All disclaimers apply. Rated PG13. <br>Jack's Bar and Grill/West LA

>Lenny Defranco walked over to the dark corner table carrying a briefcase and sat <br>down, "Are you Mr. X?" "That's me," answered the tall slender man, dressed in

>black, wearing dark sunglasses, "You must be Mr. Defranco. What can I do for <br>you?" A waitress moves over to their table, "May I get you gentlemen something

>to drink?" "I'll take a whiskey sour," said Mr. Defranco. "I'll have a shot of <br>tequila with lime," replied Mr. X. As she walked away, Mr. Defranco said,

>"There's someone I'd like for you to kill for me but first I want him to suffer <br>for awhile." "Who's my target?" asked Mr. X as the waitress returned with two

>drinks and placed them on the table. As she walked away, Mr. Defranco handed <br>Mr.X a picture and replied, "Mark Sloan. He's a doctor at Community General

>Hospital. His son is a lieutenant with the police department. Lt. Sloan arrested <br>my father a few months ago for suspicion of murder and he was denied bond. For

>two months my father was beaten and tortured in jail and the cops wouldn't do <br>anything about it. Finally two weeks ago my father was stabbed to death in his

>cell. Now I want Lt. Sloan to know what it's like for his dad to be tortured and <br>killed. I want you to kidnap Dr. Sloan, beat the hell out of him, take some

>pictures of him and then call me and I'll tell you how to get them to me. Just <br>don't kill him until I give you the final word." "No

problem," said Mr. X, "but  
>it's gonna cost you. Since I'll be on this project for a week or  
two, I'm gonna <br>need a quarter of a million dollars." "It's worth  
it to me. I'll give you half  
>the money today and the other half when the job is finished," Mr.  
Defranco said <br>as he handed Mr. X an envelope. Mr. X took the  
envelope and thumbed thru the  
>money, downed his shot of tequila, bit his lime, stood up and said,  
"It'll be a <br>pleasure doing business with you," and left.

>"Steve, have you seen my sun glasses? I just had them 10 minutes  
ago," Mark <br>asked. Steve laughed as he walked over to Mark and  
replied, "Dad there right  
>here on top of your head," as he took the glasses off Mark's head  
and handed <br>them to him. Mark laughed and scratched his head, "I  
guess I'm just a little  
>anxious and nervous about this weekend." "Dad, you're gonna have a  
great time <br>this weekend. You and Madison have known each other  
for quite awhile now and  
>you've been dating for at least six weeks. I think it's great that  
you two are <br>getting away for a long weekend together." "I know  
you're right Steve, it's just  
>been awhile since I've done anything like this," Mark replied as he  
continued <br>gathering last minute things to take with him. "Dad  
just go and enjoy each  
>other's company and whatever happens happens," Steve said as he  
walked towards <br>the door with his father then continued, "Aren't  
you suppose to pick Madison up  
>at the hospital?" "Yes and I'm late. If you need me, call me on my  
cell phone. <br>We'll be somewhere on Cypress Ridge Mountain. Or you  
can call Eric Davis at the  
>lodge office and he'll know which cabin we're in," Mark said as he  
grabbed his <br>heavy coat from the coat rack and headed for the car.  
"Have a good time dad,"  
>Steve said as he smiled and waved goodbye to Mark. <br>At the  
hospital, Mark parked his car and went inside to find Madison. As he

>approached her office, he saw her bags outside the door. As he  
entered the <br>office he waved to Madison who was sitting at her  
desk on the phone. She smiled  
>and held up one finger and mouthed the words "One minute" to Mark.  
He returned <br>the smile and nodded his head in understanding.

>Mr. X was hanging out at the hospital looking for Mark. He spotted  
him when he <br>walked in the door and followed him down the hall and  
watched him go into an  
>office, keeping his distance, not drawing attention to himself. He  
stopped a few <br>doors down from the office Mark entered and waited  
for him to come out.  
>Jesse and Amanda walked up to Madison's office and spoke to Mark.  
Mark said, <br>"Hey guys. You've come along at just the right time.  
It looks like Maddie is  
>taking everything but the kitchen sink, so I need help getting these  
bags out to <br>the car." "I heard that Mark. I was a Girl Scout you  
know and I feel it's best  
>to be prepared for anything," Madison remarked as she hung up the  
phone and <br>headed towards the door. She continued, "Besides, I'm  
not sure what kind of  
>accommodations to expect. It is a cabin in the mountains and it's  
been my <br>experience that some can be pretty rustic." Amanda said,

"Come on Jesse. Let's  
>help these two get these bags out to the car so they can begin their  
fun weekend <br>together." "Ok," replied Jesse, picking up two of the  
bags then continuing, "Hey  
>Mark, I hear the fishing up there this time of year is great."  
"Jesse!" Amanda <br>snapped, "I don't think these two are going to  
the mountains to fish. That's not  
>very romantic." "I think fish are romantic," Jesse groveled. Mark  
and Maddie <br>just laughed as the four of them walked down the hall,  
out the door and to the  
>car. Mr. X followed. <br>Jesse placed the bags he was carrying into  
Mark's trunk and said, "Amanda, let  
>me have that bag so I can put it in here." Suddenly a beeping sound  
filled the <br>air. Amanda looked down at her beeper then said; "I've  
got to get back. You guys  
>have a great time." She kissed Mark and Madison on the cheek and  
headed back <br>towards the door. She was looking at her beeper, not  
watching where she was  
>going, when she ran into Mr. X. "Why don't you watch where you're  
going?" he <br>said angrily then hurried on. "I'm sorry! Maybe you  
could see better if you  
>weren't wearing such dark shades," Amanda said loudly. <br>Jesse  
said his good-byes and Mark and Madison were off to their weekend in  
the  
>mountains. They never noticed that they were being followed. <br>"Hi  
Eric," Mark said to the man behind the desk as he entered the lodging  
  
>office. "Hey Mark. How are you?" the man returned his greeting. "I'm  
doing fine. <br>I've really been looking forward to this weekend.  
Were you able to get me into  
>that cabin on the ridge by the lake?" Mark replied. "I sure did  
Mark. Here are <br>the keys. I hope you enjoy yourself. Oh by the  
way, I've just heard a weather  
>update and it seems we could have a pretty good snowstorm tonight.  
You should <br>stop by that little store up on Ridge Road and get you  
some extra fire wood,"  
>Eric told Mark as he handed him the keys. "I will," Mark said, "and  
thanks for <br>everything Eric." "Anytime Mark," Eric replied as Mark  
went out the door.  
>Mark pulled into the parking lot at the Little Mountain Store. He  
and Madison <br>got out and went inside to pick up some last minute  
grocery items and extra  
>firewood. Mr. X parked down the road and watched them. <br>"Wow, I  
can't believe we're finally here," Madison said as they pulled up to  
the  
>cabin. She and Mark got out of the car and Madison continued, "This  
place is as <br>beautiful as you said it would be." She stood looking  
at the sun glimmering off  
>the lake and Mark walked over and took her by the hand as they  
walked a little <br>closer to the lake. Mark said, "I can't believe  
you ever doubted me," smiling  
>like a school kid who had just pleased his teacher. They stood  
together admiring <br>the natural beauty of the place until some  
clouds started overtaking the sun.  
>"We better get the car unpacked," Mark said as they turned to head  
back towards <br>the cabin. Mr. X had stopped his car on the side of  
the road and now stood in  
>the woods watching Mark and Madison, mentally planning what his next  
move would <br>be. He thought how convenient it was to have his  
target in a cabin in the middle

>of the woods. "Easy money," he laughed to himself. <br>As they entered the cabin, Madison said, "This is great! Why would anybody

>furnish a mountain cabin this nicely?" Mark replied, "It belongs to a wealthy <br>business man in Santa Monica who actually comes up here quite a bit. He wanted

>to make it homey. That's why I wasn't sure we would be in this cabin. He was <br>suppose to be here this weekend but something came up at the last minute. I've

>stayed here a few times before and I love it here." "I can see why," Madison <br>said happily.

>They spent the rest of the afternoon talking and preparing dinner, getting to <br>know each other better. After dinner, they washed the dishes, then went over by

>the fireplace and sat on the sofa and listened to the radio. One of the curtains <br>was slightly opened and they could see that snow was falling. Madison went over

>to the window and looked out, "Mark, it must have been snowing for some time. It <br>looks like there's about a foot of snow on the ground already." Mark walked over

>to look. "Wow, that's beautiful," he said smiling then continued, "We may just <br>be stuck here until it melts, for days, weeks, who knows." Madison laughed,

>"What shall we do?" Mark put his arm around Madison and led her back to the <br>sofa, "I think it's most important to stay warm." As they sat down on the sofa,

>they looked at each other for a moment and then began kissing each other. They <br>continued holding each other and kissing for awhile. Mark said, "I'm a little

>rusty at this. It's been awhile since I've been in a serious relationship." <br>Madison replied, "Me too, but I think we can figure it out. I understand it's

>like riding a bicycle." They both laughed and went back to kissing each other. <br>They were both becoming very aroused when suddenly there was a knock at the

>door. <br>They were both startled. Mark walked over to the door and loudly asked, "Who's

>there?" A voice came from outside, "My car broke down about a mile up the road <br>and I was walking down the road when I spotted the light in your windows." Mark

>cautiously opened the door and peeked out. He saw a man standing there covered <br>in snow. He opened the door and told the man to come in. As the man made his way

>in, Mark closed the door. When Mark turned around the man sucker punched Mark in <br>the stomach and Mark bent over double. Madison jumped up, "Hey what do you think

>you're doing?" Mr. X pulled a gun out from under his coat and pointed it at <br>Madison, "Stop right there. Sorry lady. You're at the wrong place at the wrong

>time. Now you go sit in one of those kitchen chairs and put your hands behind <br>you." Madison hesitated and said, "Let me see if he's ok." Mr. X cocked the gun

>and then kicked Mark in the ribs and Mark let out a yell. "Now go sit down," Mr. <br>X demanded. Madison went and sat in a chair. Mark rolled around on the floor

>clutching his abdomen. Mr. X walked over to a lamp, unplugged it and jerked the <br>cord loose. He took the cord and tied Madison's hands behind the back of the

>chair. She said, "Why are you doing this? Who are you and what has Mark done to <br>you?" "You ask too many questions lady. Now sit

there and shut up," Mr. X said  
>as he walked back over to Mark. "Get up old man," he said as he  
grabbed Mark's <br>arm and pulled him up. He led Mark over to a  
kitchen chair about five feet away  
>from Madison. This time he ripped the cord off of the toaster and  
tied Mark's <br>hands behind the chair. "What do you want?" Mark  
asked with twinges of pain in  
>his voice. Mr. X said, "I'm just the hired hand Dr. Sloan." "For who  
and why?" <br>Mark asked. "For this," Mr. X said as he back handed  
Mark's face with his left  
>hand and then his right hand. Mark yelled out in pain. Madison  
screamed, "STOP!" <br>Mr. X walked over and slapped Madison as hard  
as he could in the mouth and said  
>angrily, "I told you to shut up woman." Madison began to cry as a  
trickle of <br>blood started rolling down the side of her mouth. Mark  
tried to get out of his  
>chair and yelled, "Leave her alone! Your beef is with me not her."  
Mr. X walked <br>back over to Mark and said, "My my. You're a brave  
old fart aren't you?" as he  
>back handed Mark again and again. Then he punched him in the gut  
several times. <br>He punched him in the left eye with his right hand  
and the chair toppled over.  
>Mark moaned heavily with every hit. Madison cried uncontrollably,  
pleading with <br>Mr. X to leave Mark alone.  
>He sat the chair back up with Mark in it and pulled Mark's head back  
so he could <br>get a good look at him. Mark's face was starting to  
swell, his left eye was red  
>and blood trickled from his nose and mouth. He was barely conscious.  
Mr. X went <br>to his coat and took a digital camera from his pocket  
and took several pictures  
>of Mark. He said, "Yeah, these are great doc. You're gonna make me a  
rich man." <br>Madison still had tears streaming down her cheeks. She  
quietly asked again, "Why  
>are you doing this to him?" Mr. X replied, "Why can't you keep your  
mouth shut <br>lady?" "I just think we deserve an explanation,"  
Madison said. "Ok," Mr. X said,  
>"I'm doing it for money." "But why?" Madison asked. <br>Mr. X stared  
at Madison for several minutes then answered, "I guess it can't

>hurt to tell you since you won't make it out of this cabin alive. It  
seems the <br>doc's son put a mobster's dad in jail and he got beat  
up and then stabbed to  
>death. Mr. D just wants to repay the doc's son." "So you're going to  
send those <br>pictures to Mark's son?" Madison asked. "I'm going to  
send these pictures to Mr.  
>D and he will do with them whatever he wants." Mr. X looked at his  
watch then <br>said, "I'll call Mr. D in the morning. I'm going to  
get a little sleep. Don't go  
>anywhere." He laughed as he put some logs on the fire and lay down  
on the sofa <br>to rest. Madison worked on getting her hands free.  
The cord had really cut into  
>her wrists. She gazed over at Mark, who seemed to be in and out of  
<br>consciousness, and was more determined than ever to get loose.

>Jesse and Amanda walked into BBQ Bobs. "Hey Steve. How's business  
today?" Jesse <br>asked as he and Amanda sat at the bar. "Kinda slow  
this morning," Steve said as  
>he poured them cups of hot coffee. "Umm, that hits the spot," Amanda  
said as she <br>took a sip from her cup then continued, "Have you  
heard from Mark?" "No," Steve

>said, "I've been thinking about calling and checking on them. I saw on the <br>weather that there was quite a snow storm up in the mountains." "I think you  
>should Steve. For some reason I've had a funny feeling about them since they <br>left yesterday," Amanda said. "Oh Amanda, your just being paranoid," Jesse  
>chimed in, "I bet they're having a great time all snowed in together, cuddled up <br>together by the fireplace to keep warm." Steve rolled his eyes at Jesse, "Ok  
>Jesse. We get the picture but I think I'll try dad on his cell phone for my own <br>peace of mind." Steve picked up the phone and dialed Mark's number. "Hmm," Steve  
>grunted, "the operator came on after several rings and said the cell customer <br>you're trying to reach is not answering. It's not like dad to have his cell  
>phone on and not answer it." "I have Madison's cell phone number somewhere here <br>in my purse," Amanda said as she fumbled for her address book. "Here it is. Try  
>this number," she said as she handed Steve the address book. "Same thing," Steve <br>said, "something's not right. I'm going to call Eric Davis at the lodge office  
>and ask him if he's seen them." Steve took out his wallet and found the phone <br>number. "Eric, hi, this is Steve Sloan." "Fine, how are you?" "That's great.  
>Eric, have you seen my dad?" "You say they checked in around 4:00pm yesterday. <br>I'm just a little concerned because I tried to call him and he's not answering  
>his phone. I think I may ride up there." "My truck is a four wheel drive so I <br>think I can make it." "Ok, thanks Eric. Bye." "Eric said we should wait a couple  
>of hours to let the sun melt some of the snow. He's not sure we can make it up <br>to the cabin that dad rented," Steve said to Amanda and Jesse.  
>Madison had managed to free her hands but decided to stay where she was and not <br>make her move until the right time. Mr. X woke up when a streak of sunlight came  
>thru a part in the curtains and warmed his face. He got up and threw a few more <br>logs on the fire. He saw that Madison was awake but the doc still seemed to be  
>out of it. "Hello sunshine," he said to Madison as he walked over to Mark and <br>slapped him in the face a few times. "Wake up doc," he said to Mark. Mark just  
>let out a couple of groans. "Leave him alone," Madison begged. "You hush up <br>little lady. I'm just gonna take a couple more pictures of your boyfriend. He  
>looks much worse this morning than he did last night. I think Mr. D will like <br>these pictures even better," he remarked as he snapped a couple more pictures of  
>Mark. "Don't you think he's suffered enough?" Madison asked. "I guess," Mr. X <br>said as he walked towards Madison, "but you haven't. I think the least I could  
>do for the doc is see that you have a good time. Don't you?" "Don't touch me!" <br>Madison said angrily as she tried to keep calm, knowing that this wasn't the  
>right time to show that her hands were free. She knew she couldn't overpower <br>him, she would have to somehow attack him by surprise. Mr. X began to kiss  
>Madison on the neck. "STOP!" she said firmly, but he continued. "I don't have <br>to," he laughed as he tried to kiss her on the lips. She spat in his face. He

>backhanded her across the face. "You want to play rough, we'll play rough," he <br>said as he ripped Madison's shirt open. She turned her head and closed her eyes  
>as he took a knife from his pocket and cut the front of her bra into. He grabbed <br>both of her breasts and squeezed them tightly. She could feel his fingernails  
>tearing into her skin and tears streamed down her face. Suddenly Mr. X's cell <br>phone started ringing, "Damn it!" he yelled. He grabbed Madison's face and said,  
>"I'll be right back." Madison let out a small sigh of relief and listened to Mr. <br>X's end of his conversation.  
>"X here." "Hey Mr. D." "Yes I have your pictures." "I'll have to go out to my <br>car to email them to you. I've got one of those laptops linked via my cell  
>service. I'll just hook my camera up to it and you should have them in 15 to 20 <br>minutes." "Ok Mr. D. I'll be waiting to hear from you to finish him off."  
>"Don't go anywhere baby. I'll be back in a few minutes and we can take up where <br>we left off," Mr. X said to Madison as he winked at her. She turned her head in  
>disgust. Mr. X picked up the camera put on his coat and went out the door. <br>Madison waited a couple of minutes to make sure he wasn't coming back and then  
>she jumped up and dashed for the bedroom as she knew she didn't have much time. <br>She grabbed her purse and pulled out a handgun she had bought. She took bullets  
>from a small box in her purse and loaded the gun. She quickly went back into the <br>living room where Mark was. She went over to him and lifted his head with one  
>hand. He was semi-conscious. She said, "Hold on Mark. It won't be long now." She <br>kissed him on the forehead as a tear ran down her cheek and landed on his face.  
>She gently brushed the tear away and then went back and assumed her position in <br>the chair where she had been tied. She gripped the gun in her right hand and put  
>her arms back behind the chair as if she were still tied up and waited for Mr. X <br>to come back.  
>"Are you Steve Sloan?" the courier said to Jesse. "No. Just a minute," Jesse <br>replied, "Hey Steve. You have a letter up here you need to sign for." Steve came  
>out of the kitchen and over to the cash register where the courier stood. He <br>signed for the large envelope and tipped the courier. The courier left as Steve  
>looked at the address on the envelope and tore into it. "Oh God," Steve said <br>loudly and continued, "Amanda, see if you can stop that courier." Amanda darted  
>out the door of BBQ Bobs and looked for the courier but he was already gone. She <br>went back in and said, "No luck Steve. He was already gone. What's wrong?"  
>"Yeah, what is wrong Steve? You look a little pale," Jesse chimed in. "Look," <br>Steve said as he threw the pictures on the counter where Jesse and Amanda could  
>see them. "Oh my God! It's Mark," Amanda said as a few tears fell down her face. <br>"I knew something was wrong. I just had a gut feeling--plus the fact that dad  
>nor Madison answered their cell phones," Steve said angrily. "We've got to find <br>them Steve," Jesse said as he pulled his apron off and tossed it on the counter.  
>"You're right Jess," Steve said as he took another look at the pictures. Jesse <br>picked up the ringing phone, "BBQ Bobs." "Steve

it's for you," Jesse said as he  
>handed Steve the phone. "Sloan here." "Who are you?" "What...what do  
you want <br>from me?" "I swear if my father dies, I'll hunt you down  
like a mad dog and put  
>a bullet thru your sorry ass scull." Steve hung up the phone. "We've  
got to find <br>them guys," Steve said with great urgency in his  
voice. "What did the caller  
>say?" Jesse questioned. "He said how does it feel to have your  
father beat all <br>to hell and there's nothing you can do about it?  
He said he didn't want anything  
>from me. He just wants me to suffer the same way he did...until my  
father dies," <br>Steve said as his voice started to crack. "He also  
said if I contact the station  
>about this, he will kill dad instantly," Steve added. "Steve, do you  
recognize <br>the room your dad is in in these pictures?" Amanda  
asked. "Yes, that's a cabin  
>he's rented several times. It's way up in the mountains. I've been  
there with <br>him before," Steve answered as he studied the  
pictures. "Let's go," Jesse said.  
>They all headed out and got in Steve's truck. <br>Mr. X came back in  
and took his coat off. He put several more logs on the fire  
>and stood by the fireplace warming his cold body. Madison watched  
him carefully and <br>waited for the right moment to try and overtake  
him. "Well little lady, did you  
>miss me? I think I've warmed up enough to get back to what we were  
doing before <br>we were interrupted. I know your probably hot just  
thinking about it aren't  
>you?" he said as he started walking towards Madison. As he  
approached, Madison <br>brought her hands around in front of her and  
grasped the gun with both hands and  
>pointed it straight at Mr. X. "Stop or I'll shoot," Madison called  
out <br>nervously. Mr. X stopped for a moment and replied, "You don't  
have the guts to  
>shoot me lady." He lunged toward Madison and she started firing. She  
didn't stop <br>until the gun was empty. Mr. X fell to the floor.  
Madison let the gun fall to  
>the floor as she sat breathing heavily and sobbing, her face buried  
in her <br>hands.  
>"Maddie," Mark called quietly. Madison looked up to see that Mark  
was conscious. <br>She got up and went over to him and untied his  
hands. "Mark, I didn't realize  
>you were conscious," Madison said. "I have been for a short time,"  
Mark answered <br>as Madison helped him out of the chair and into the  
bedroom and on to the bed.  
>"Lie back and let me check you out," Madison said as Mark laid down,  
moaning <br>with every movement.  
>"Steve, do you know who would do this?" Amanda asked as they rode  
along. "He <br>said he wanted me to suffer like him. Amanda, I guess  
there's alot of people who  
>think I've made them suffer for crimes they've committed. It could  
be any of <br>them," Steve answered. "Then why take it out on Mark? I  
mean why not just beat  
>you up instead of your dad?" Jesse asked. "I see what you mean,"  
Amanda said <br>then continued, "Steve, maybe this is a family member  
or friend of someone  
>you've arrested or maybe someone you shot. Can you think of anyone  
like that?" <br>"I don't know. I'll have to go back and look thru my  
files Amanda," Steve said  
>as they drove by the lodging office. "It's just a few more miles up  
this road," <br>Steve said. "The road conditions keep getting worse



Steve. Do you think we can  
>make it?" Jesse questioned. "We have to. Oh, damn it," Steve said as they slid <br>off into a ditch. "Why'd you have to say that Jesse?" Amanda snapped. "What?"  
>It's not my fault. I was just commenting on my observations," Jesse said. "Come <br>on Jess, let's see if we can get this thing back on the road. You stir Amanda,"  
>Steve said as he opened the door and climbed out. <br>"You look pretty bad Mark," Madison said as she looked Mark over. "Thanks alot,"  
>Mark said trying to lighten things up a little. "Your eye is swollen shut, your <br>nose and mouth are both busted on the edges, and you have a mild concussion,"  
>Madison said as she gently turned his head from side to side. She unbuttoned and <br>opened his shirt and examined his torso. "It feels like you've got a couple of  
>cracked ribs and your body is very badly bruised," she said as Mark winced when <br>she touched the area around his ribs. A tear ran down her cheek as she looked at  
>Mark. Mark reached up and took one side of Madison's shirt which was still open <br>from Mr. X's attack and asked, "Maddie, did he..."  
"No," she stopped him before  
>he could finish asking. "He was going to but thank God the phone interrupted <br>him." Mark pulled open Madison's shirt and exposed her bruised and scratched  
>breasts. A tear rolled down Mark's cheek and he said, "I'm sorry I got you in <br>this mess Maddie. I'm sorry he hurt you." "Mark, this was not your fault. We  
>were just victims of some crazy man out for revenge against Steve. And believe <br>me, if I had to go thru it all again I would if it meant saving you. I love you  
>Mark," Madison said as she took Mark's hand and gently kissed it. "I love you <br>too Maddie," Mark said as he managed a slight smile.  
"Let me get my bag and  
>doctor that face a little," Madison said as she went for her medical bag. She <br>also got a warm cloth and a cloth filled with ice. She put the ice pack on  
>Mark's eye and told him to hold it there while she carefully wiped the dried <br>blood away from his nose and mouth. "I'm going to give you a shot of pain killer  
>in the abdomen Mark. I don't want to give you anything too strong because of the <br>concussion," Madison said as she reached in her bag for a syringe and vile of  
>painkiller. "Whatever you say doc. I trust your judgement," Mark responded. "I <br>hope you don't have any internal injuries. That could be big trouble if we can't  
>get out of here soon," Madison said as she stuck the needle in Mark's mid <br>section. Mark gritted his teeth as she emptied the syringe into him. "I think  
>I'm going to wrap your ribs too," Madison said as she searched her bag and <br>Mark's bag for some ace bandages. She found the bandages and wrapped Mark's ribs  
>tight. "I'm going to change shirts and then see if I can get us out of here," <br>Madison remarked.  
>"It's no use Steve, this truck is just too far off the road for the two of us to <br>push it back on the road in this icy slush," Jesse said as he rested on the tail  
>gate. "I think your right Jess. Put it in park," Steve yelled to Amanda then <br>continued as Amanda got out of the truck and joined them, "Are you guys up to

>walking the rest of the way. It's at least a couple of miles, maybe more?" <br>"We've got to Steve. We don't know exactly how bad Mark is hurt and we don't  
>know anything about Madison," Amanda answered. "Let's go," Jesse chimed in. So <br>off they continued on foot.  
>"Mark, how are you feeling?" Madison asked as she came back into the bedroom <br>where Mark had been resting. "Like an old worn out punching bag," Mark replied  
>with a slight grin. "It looks like the ice helped your eye. It looks more like <br>an eye now," Madison said. "It still hurts like hell," Mark responded then  
>continued, "Any chance of getting us out of here?" "Well, both of our cell <br>phones are dead. I went out and surveyed the road. It's still pretty much frozen  
>over but I think it'll be much better in an hour or two because the sun is <br>really beaming down on it. So maybe we'll be able to leave in a little while,"  
>Madison answered. "Maddie come lay down beside me and rest for the next hour or <br>so until we can leave," Mark said. Madison did as Mark asked. He said, "Maddie  
>will you hold me? I'm cold." "Sure Mark," Madison said as she opened her arms <br>and Mark snuggled up next to her. She kissed him on top of the head. "Thanks for  
>being here with me Maddie," Mark said. "I can't think of anywhere else I'd <br>rather be or anyone else I'd rather be with Mark," Madison said as she and Mark  
>both drifted off to sleep. <br>"How much further Steve?" Amanda asked then continued, "We've been walking for  
>about 2 hours." "You see that smoke up ahead? That's it," Steve answered. "Thank <br>God," Jesse said, "I don't think my frozen feet could make it much further."  
>"There's dad's car and that must be the car that belongs to his attacker," Steve <br>observed then continued, "Let's try and take a look inside the windows and  
>assess the situation instead of just barging in." "Let's go," Amanda said. <br>"Steve, Amanda," Jesse quietly called. They both went over to where Jesse was.  
>"There's a body lying on the floor behind the sofa but I can't see enough of it <br>to know if it's Mark or Madison," Jesse said as he stepped back from the window  
>so the others could have a look. Steve then Amanda looked into the slight <br>opening of the curtains in the window and saw what Jesse had seen. There were no  
>signs of life visible. "Ok guys. I'm going in first and you two follow me," <br>Steve said as he drew his weapon and approached the cabin door. He turned the  
>door knob and cautiously entered the cabin with Jesse and Amanda right behind <br>him. They quietly walked over to the body and looked at each other relieved that  
>it wasn't Mark or Madison. Jesse felt for a pulse. "He's dead," Jesse mouthed. <br>Steve looked around the room and saw the chairs with the cords on the floor  
>beside them. He saw the gun lying on the floor beside one of the chairs. He <br>quietly and cautiously moved toward the bedroom door. He held his gun out in  
>front of him and quickly turned the corner to look in the bedroom. He saw his <br>dad and Madison lying on the bed together. He lowered his gun to his side as he  
>stood looking at them for a moment, making sure they were breathing. He put his <br>weapon away and looked back at Amanda and Jesse and

said quietly, "They're in  
>here guys." Amanda and Jesse both stepped into the doorway with  
Steve as they <br>all stood there looking at Mark and Madison. "Thank  
God," Amanda whispered.  
>Madison woke up and saw them all standing in the doorway. She smiled  
at them and <br>they smiled back. Then she started to cry as she  
gently woke Mark up and said,  
>"I think we've got company." "Steve, Amanda, Jesse. Boy are we glad  
to see you," <br>Mark said. Madison got up and walked over to them  
and hugged each one of them as  
>she continued to sob. Amanda and Jesse went over to Mark and started  
checking <br>out his injuries. Madison and Steve walked into the  
living room where Mr. X's  
>body lay. "Tell me what happened Madison. I don't recognize this guy  
on the <br>floor. Why was he out for revenge? I don't think I ever  
did anything to him,"  
>Steve inquired. "Steve, this guy was a hired hit man. He's not the  
one that was <br>out for revenge. He called himself Mr. X," Madison  
told him. Steve reached into  
>his pockets and found a driver's license. "Trent Alexander is what  
it says on <br>his license. I don't recognize the name. Maybe someone  
at the station knows  
>about him. Madison did he ever give any indication who he was  
working for?" <br>Steve asked. "Yes," Madison answered then  
continued, "He said you had arrested a  
>mobster's dad who was beaten and stabbed to death in jail. He called  
him Mr. D." <br>"Lenny Defranco," Steve said angrily. "Do you know  
him?" Madison asked. "Yes. I  
>did arrest his father and he was killed in jail...by a rival mob.  
Lenny wouldn't <br>accept that and he blamed me. I'm gonna kill his  
sorry ass when I get my hands  
>on him," Steve answered. "How's dad doing?" Steve asked. "He's  
holding his own <br>Steve. He's tough but we need to get him to the  
hospital in case there are  
>internal injuries," Madison said as tears streamed down her face.  
"You shot Mr. <br>X didn't you?" Steve asked. Madison nodded her head  
and then lowered it as she  
>continued to cry. Steve walked over and hugged Madison tightly and  
said, "You <br>did the right thing Madison. He would have killed you  
and dad if you hadn't  
>killed him first. I don't want you to regret that decision." "Oh  
Steve. I'm a <br>doctor. I'm suppose to save people not kill them,"  
Madison cried. "You saved my  
>dad and yourself. You did the right thing," Steve said as he  
consoled her. <br>"Thank you Steve," Madison said as she began to  
regain control of her emotions.  
>Jesse joined Steve and Madison in the living room. Mark asked Amanda  
to stay <br>behind with him a minute. "Amanda, Madison has some  
injuries I want you to look  
>at. She's stubborn and won't tell you about them," Mark said. "I saw  
her wrists. <br>They look pretty bad," Amanda replied. "Not her  
wrists," Mark said then  
>continued, "It's her breasts." "Her breasts?" Amanda questioned.  
"Yes. That guy <br>was attempting to rape her but thank God he was  
interrupted. He had ripped open  
>her shirt and when she was helping me to the bed I saw them. They're  
very <br>bruised and have some gashes in them," Mark said as he  
choked back some tears.  
>"I'll check her out Mark," Amanda assured him. "Thanks Amanda," Mark  
said then <br>added, "Just be discrete about it. She's very modest

when it comes to stuff like

>that. "I will. Don't worry Mark," Amanda said as she kissed Mark on the forehead <br>and went into the living room to join the others.

>"Amanda, how's dad?" Steve asked as she walked over to where Steve, Jesse, and <br>Madison were standing. "He's stable," Amanda said as she stared at Mr. X lying

>on the floor. "What is it Amanda," Jesse asked. "Not that it matters now, but I <br>just realized that he's the guy I ran into as I was going back into the hospital

>when Mark and Madison were leaving. He must have followed you guys from the <br>hospital," Amanda said. "I guess he did," Madison said then continued, "We were

>so excited about this trip that we didn't even notice him." "Amanda, I've called <br>this in to the station and they're sending up a squad car, the coroner's van,

>and an ambulance," Steve said. "Good. Mark really needs to get to the hospital <br>for a thorough exam," Amanda remarked.

>Steve said, "I'm going in to see dad. Could you guys give us some time alone?" <br>"Sure," they all answered in unison. "We'll be right here if you need us Steve,"

>Madison added. <br>Steve walked over and sat down on the bed by Mark. He took his dad's hand and

>they stared silently at each other for a moment. "Dad.." "Steve," Mark cut him <br>off, "I'm gonna be fine son. This wasn't your fault." "Dad, remember when mom

>made me that Superman suit when I was a kid. I loved that thing. I never wanted <br>to take it off. I thought I was Superman. And remember how you and I used to sit

>and watch the Superman show on TV together. I thought nobody could hurt Superman <br>and you told me that Lex Luther was evil but clever and he'd find a way to get

>to Superman. Sure enough, Lex Luther kidnapped Superman's parents and made <br>Superman do things he wouldn't normally have done for Lex Luther. But in the

>end, Superman rescued his parents and so Superman prevailed over the evil Lex <br>Luther. When I graduated from the academy and received this badge, I thought I

>was Superman all over again. I wanted to keep everyone safe from the Lex Luthers <br>of the world. But now I know there are too many Lex Luthers in this world and it

>eats me up inside that I can't always protect the people I love from them. <br>Especially you dad. I hate this guy for hurting you. I'm just no Superman dad."

>"Son, Superman always prevailed because he didn't let his emotions make him do <br>things he would regret later. He didn't let Lex Luther drive him to violence.

>Let someone else go pick up this Mr. D. Don't do anything you'll regret for the <br>rest of your life. I want him punished just as much as you do, but I don't want

>to lose you in the process. Now promise me you won't do anything crazy." <br>"I won't dad," Steve said as he brushed Mark's hair back and kissed him on the

>forehead, "You get some rest. An ambulance should be here soon."

<br>"Jesse, let's go outside and see how the road's looking and check out Mr. X's

>car," Steve said as he walked back into the living room and put his coat on. <br>"Sure Steve," Jesse said as he grabbed his coat.

>"I'm glad they left us alone," Amanda commented to Madison. "Why,"

Madison questioned. "Mark told me about Mr. X attacking you," Amanda answered. "He  
>shouldn't have," Madison stated angrily. "Yes he should have," Amanda said then continued, "Now let me have a look." "It's nothing Amanda. I'll be fine,"  
>Madison protested. "I promised Mark. You know I'm not giving up until you let me check you out," Amanda insisted. Madison let out a heavy sigh and said, "Oh  
>alright." She sat down in a chair and unbuttoned her shirt. "These are some nasty looking wounds Madison. Exactly what did he do," Amanda questioned. Tears  
>began to roll down Madison's cheeks, "He just grabbed me and squeezed and twisted and dug his claws into me." "It's ok," Amanda squeezed Madison's hand,  
>"I'm going to get your bag and get some antiseptic ointment and bandages out of it and fix you up. We don't want you getting an infection. I think we need to do  
>the same for your wrists." Madison nodded and Amanda retrieved the bag from the bedroom. She dressed Madison's wounds and said, "You're gonna need to keep an  
>eye on your breasts. You should get an exam and probably a mammogram in a couple of weeks, when the soreness wears off. I think you may want to consider seeing  
>one of the counselors at CG also. I can see that this has been an emotionally draining experience for you as it would have been for anyone. Just think about  
>it." "You're probably right. Thanks Amanda," Madison replied. "You know, this is the kind of thing that friends are for," Amanda said as she gave Madison a  
>much-needed hug. Steve and Jesse were looking thru Mr. X's belongings in his car. "Steve, what  
>exactly are we looking for," Jesse asked. "Anything that will tell us where to find Lenny Defranco," Steve answered. "What are you going to do to him when you  
>find him?" Jesse questioned. "I'm not exactly sure Jess. My instincts tell me to kill the bastard, but my dad's voice keeps chiming in to just arrest him," Steve  
>answered. "Hey, here's a laptop. I'll try and look at his files and see if there's any info in here," Jesse said then continued, "You know Steve, I think  
>of Mark as a father and it really makes me angry to see him hurt like he is. But I also think of you as a big brother and best friend so I couldn't bear it if  
>you got hurt or arrested either. Maybe Mark is right. You should just arrest him and be done with it." "Great. Now I can add your voice chiming in with dads,"  
>Steve said. "Bingo!" Jesse said. "You got something," Steve asked. "No, he has bingo on this laptop and I just bingo'd," Jesse laughed. Steve rolled his eyes.  
>"I'm just kidding Steve. Mr. X has quite a file here on your Lenny Defranco, including his address." "Great work Jess. If your good I'll buy you your very  
>own bingo game," Steve said laughing but gratefully. "One thing Steve. I won't give you this info unless you agree to let me go with you to arrest Defranco,"  
>Jesse said. "But Jess," Steve quipped. "No buts," Jesse said as he closed the laptop. "Ok," Steve said, "But you have to let me do all the dirty work." "Fair  
>enough," Jesse said with that boyish grin on his face. Madison walked over to the bedroom door and looked in on Mark. "Maddie, come

sit

>with me," Mark said when he saw Madison standing in the doorway. "I thought you <br>were sleeping," Madison said as she made her way to the bed and sat down by

>Mark. "How you holding up?" Madison said as she took Mark's hand and gently <br>rubbed it. "I'm hurting pretty bad around the ribs but I'll be ok. How about you

>Maddie?" Madison shook her head and said, "I'm a bit tired but I'm hanging in <br>there." Mark held their hands up slightly and said, "I see Amanda fixed your

>wrists up." "Yes and you can relax. She took a look at my chest also and fixed <br>that up for me as well," Madison said as she leaned down and kissed Mark. "Hey,

>what was that for," Mark asked teasingly. "For caring about me," Madison <br>answered and continued, "and because I love you so much." "Hey listen. Finally.

>Sirens. It's about time they got here," Madison said as she stood up and walked <br>into the living room with Amanda.

>The police and ambulance arrived. Madison and Amanda rode in the ambulance with <br>Mark. Jesse and Steve stayed behind to try and get Steve's truck out of the

>ditch and to drive Mark's car back. <br>Steve and Jesse arrived at the beach house. Jesse parked Mark's car in the

>driveway and got out. "Come on. Get in," Steve called to Jesse.

Jesse climbed in <br>the truck with Steve. "I'm going by the station to see if the arrest warrant is

>ready for Lenny Defranco. Hopefully it is. We'll take a couple of uniforms with <br>us and get this over with. The more I think about what he did to dad the more

>angry I get," Steve said as they drove toward the precinct. "Look Steve, I'm <br>angry too but you have to keep a clear head. Don't let your anger get the best

>of you," Jesse stated. "I won't Jesse. I'm a professional," Steve said as he <br>grinned slightly.

>"Mark, you are so lucky," Amanda said then continued, "Your x-rays and other <br>test results show that you have 3 broken ribs but no other broken bones or

>internal injuries." Madison, who was sitting next to Mark holding his hand, <br>said, "Thank God. I was afraid Mr. X may have ruptured something the way he was

>kicking and beating you." "It's because of all those crunches I've been doing. <br>Yes, my body runs like a well oiled machine," Mark said as they all laughed.

>At Lenny Defranco's house, Steve, Jesse and the two uniformed officers were <br>approaching the house. "You guys go around back in case he tries to slip out on

>us," Steve told the two officers. He gave them time to get in place then he <br>knocked on the door. One of Defranco's bodyguards came to the door. "Yeah," he

>said. Steve showed his badge to the man and said, "We're here to see Lenny <br>Defranco." The guy slammed the door in Steve's face. Steve drew his weapon and

>busted the door in. The bodyguard started firing as Steve managed to get out of <br>the way but Jesse was hit right in the abdomen. The uniformed officers came thru

>the back door and one of them shot the bodyguard in the arm and then took his <br>gun from him. Steve had spotted Defranco dashing up the stairs. "You guys check

>on Jesse. I'm going after Defranco," Steve said to the officers as he headed up <br>the stairs. Defranco had gone out onto a second

story balcony and was jumping  
>down when Steve spotted him again. Steve jumped from the balcony and  
chased <br>Defranco down and tackled him. They wrestled around for a  
bit, exchanging  
>punches. Finally Steve got the upper hand and punched him about 5  
times when all <br>of a sudden someone grabbed his arm from behind.  
"Steve don't," he heard as he  
>turned around to see that Jesse had his arm. Steve dropped his head  
for a moment <br>and then said, "You're right Jess." Jesse let his  
arm go. Steve handcuffed  
>Defranco and read him his rights as he and Jesse escorted Defranco  
to the <br>uniformed officers. "Thank God for these bullet proof  
vests," Jesse said. Steve  
>just laughed and shook his head. "Thank God indeed," he said as he  
put his hand <br>on Jesse's shoulder and said, "Come on. Let's go to  
the hospital and see how dad  
>and Madison are." <br>"Maddie go home and get some rest. I know  
you're exhausted. Also, I'm sorry this  
>weekend didn't turn out the way I'd planned. I promise it'll go much  
better next <br>time..that is if you'll go with me next time," Mark  
said. Madison smiled, "Is  
>that an invitation?" "You bet," Mark said as he returned the smile.  
"You just <br>let me know when your ready," Madison said as she stood  
up and leaned down and  
>kissed Mark. "I love you Maddie," Mark said. Madison cupped Mark's  
cheek in her <br>palm and stared into his beautiful blue eyes. "I  
love you too Mark," she said as  
>she kissed him again more passionately. "I'm gonna go. I'll see you  
tomorrow," <br>she whispered as she breathed heavily. "I hope you get  
some rest," Mark said. "I  
>hope you do too. Good night Mark," she said as she headed for the  
door. "Good <br>night Maddie," Mark replied.  
>"Hey dad," Steve said as he approached Mark's bed, "How are you  
feeling?" "A <br>little better," Mark answered then asked, "Did you  
find Defranco?" "Yes we  
>did..and before you ask, he's still alive. I did hit him several  
times but Jesse <br>helped me realize he wasn't worth killing. You'd  
have been proud of us both,"  
>Steve answered. "Also, Defranco's body guard is singing like a  
canary. Seems we <br>may be able to pin a lot of charges on Mr. D,"  
Steve added. "That's great Steve.  
>I hope he's out of our lives for good," Mark said. "How's Madison?"  
Steve asked. <br>"She was exhausted so I finally convinced her to go  
home," Mark answered.  
>"Good," Steve said then continued, "I'm glad you two are gonna be  
all right. <br>I've got to go to the station and do some paperwork.  
I'll see you in the morning  
>dad." "Ok Steve," Mark said. Mark watched his son to the door and  
said, "Steve." <br>"Yeah dad," Steve said as he stopped and looked  
back at Mark. "I think Superman  
>came thru today," Mark said. Steve smiled and said "Thanks dad."  
<br>Six Weeks Later  
>"Dad, I hate going to these charity functions," Steve said as his  
dad helped him <br>with his bow tie. "I would think you would be use  
to it by now," Mark said. "Is  
>Madison going to make it?" Steve asked. "Yes, she called me from the  
airport and <br>said she would meet us there. Her plane came in a  
little late so she said she  
>would probably be late to the ball. I'm sure glad she's back. The  
last three <br>weeks have seemed like an eternity," Mark answered.

"I'm glad she's back too.

>Maybe you'll stop moping around now," Steve laughed. <br>"Hey Amanda, Jesse," Mark greeted his co-workers. "Hey Mark. I just love getting

>all dressed up for these events," Amanda said. "You would," Jesse quipped. "You <br>look lovely Amanda," Steve chimed in. "Is Madison going to make it Mark?" Amanda

>asked. "Yes but she's running late. I haven't seen her yet," Mark replied. "I <br>think she really needed the time away after that ordeal you guys went thru at

>that cabin. That dean's convention was probably a god-send," Amanda said. <br>"You're right Amanda. She really sounded good when I talked to her earlier,"

>Mark replied. <br>Madison had entered the ball room and saw Mark across the way talking with a

>group of people. She couldn't wait to see him. She just stood a few moments <br>admiring him from afar. A band was playing softly in the background and a singer

>was making his way to the stage. Madison stopped him and asked him if he would <br>dedicate a song. He agreed.

>"Ladies and gentlemen. Can I have your attention please?" the singer said then <br>continued, "I have a special request for this next song. It's dedicated from

>Madison to Mark. I would like to have Madison and Mark make their way to the <br>middle of the dance floor for the first dance of the evening."

>Mark looked across the room and saw Madison. She was wearing a blue sequin gown <br>that accented her flaming red hair and deep blue eyes. He smiled at her and she

>smiled back. They made their way to the middle of the dance floor. She thought <br>how wonderfully handsome Mark look in his classic tuxedo. When they met, Mark

>said, "My God your beautiful. Maddie I've missed you so much."

Madison said, "Oh <br>Mark I've missed you more. You look incredibly handsome tonight."

>The music started and Mark held out his arms to dance and Madison moved right <br>into place as the singer began to sing. There was a time I was everything and

>nothing all in one When you found me I was feeling like a cloud across the sun <br>I need to tell you How you light up every second of the day But in the moonlight

>You just shine like a beacon on the bay <br>And I can't explain But it's something about the way you look tonight Takes my

>breath away It's that feeling I get about you, deep inside And I can't describe <br>But it's something about the way you look tonight Takes my breath away The way

>you look tonight <br>With a smile You pull the deepest secrets from my heart In all honesty I'm

>speechless and I don't know where to start <br>They danced as the singer sang on but they were lost in each other's eyes. When

>the song finished, Mark said, "I love you Maddie." Madison answered, "I love you <br>too Mark."

>All constructive feedback welcomed. Deb122560@aol.com <div>

End  
file.